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## BOOK REVIEWS.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AT THE END OF THE FIRST CENTURY. By GEORGE S. BOUTWELL. Boston : D. C. Heath & Co. 1895.

The Constitution of the United States may be likened unto a highway much travelled by many men of many minds, each intent to expound what he sees or thinks he sees as he passeth by.

Each new commentator may well be challenged to show cause for his claim to have contributed any new light on the subject, which, however, is obviously of such grave importance that any valuable contribution must always receive a warm welcome. Let us see what the distinguished author says for himself in his preface :

“ It has been my purpose in the preparation of this volume to set forth in a concise form the substance of the leading decisions of the Supreme Court, in which the several articles, sections and clauses of the Constitution of the United States have been examined, explained and interpreted. The inquiry covers a full period of one hundred years. In that time the more important and the most important provisions of that instrument have been discussed at the Bar, and the questions arising from business transactions, from the relations of the States to the National Government, and questions growing out of our treaties with Indian tribes and with foreign nations, have been adjudicated by the court.”

Such an undertaking requires rare experience, sound legal knowledge, patient research and infinite labor. The result shows that these requirements have been met with the added reinforcement that the undertaking has been one in which the author has found pleasure and unfailing interest.

To the readers of this REVIEW it would be absurd to urge that such a work is worth doing, they will only ask has it been well done, and from a somewhat critical examination of

the sixty-four chapters, this question may be answered very positively in the affirmative. The text is succinct, covering only 412 pages, but without sacrifice of clearness, but full explanation is given of every constitutional question which has been the subject of judicial construction.

We have first the Declaration of Independence, with a concise historical note next ; then the Articles of Confederation of 1777, with another valuable note ; the Ordinance for the Northwest Territorial Government of 1787. The Text of the Constitution is annotated and admirably indexed, and is followed by two most interesting chapters, one on "The Progress of American Independence and its Basis in the Law of England," the other on "The Confederation." The remaining chapters take up the Constitution, article by article, and consider each article in the light of the judicial decisions.

The distinguishing features for which especial advantage may be claimed for this work are ; that the decisions of the Supreme Court, are cited under the sections and clauses to which the decisions relate ; the leading decisions are examined and the conclusions reached set forth specifically ; the lines between State sovereignty and the supremacy of the National Government is marked distinctly ; the Declaration of Independence is demonstrated to have had a legal basis in the colonial charters and through them in the underlying bulwarks of English liberty.

The book is therefore to be welcomed as presenting within the compass of a concise single volume, at once comprehensive and minute, a view of the Constitution, as it has been interpreted by the Supreme Court. E. P. ALLINSON.

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THE PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY AND EQUITY PLEADING. By ELIAS MERWIN, late of the Boston Bar and Professor in the Law School of Boston University. Edited by H. C. MERWIN. One Volume. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1895.

To the student or to the active practitioner this volume is of very great value. The former by a careful attention to the text may lay the foundation of a useful knowledge of the